

Message Text

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USMISSION EC BRUSSELS
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY BONN
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AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 03623

NOFORN

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PFOR, EEC, XF
SUBJECT: MARCH 1-2 EC POLITICAL DIRECTORS DISCUSSION
OF MIDDLE EAST
1. THE POLITICAL COMMITTEE APPROVED THE PAPER ON THE
SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST WHICH HAD BEEN PREPARED BY
THE BRITISH PRESIDENCY AND HEARD REPORTS BY THE FRENCH
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AND GERMAN POLITICAL DIRECTORS ON THEIR RESPECTIVE
FOREIGN MINISTERS' RECENT VISITS TO THE AREA.

2. THERE WAS NO DISCUSSION OF THE JANUARY 31 EC STATE-
MENT ON THE MIDDLE EAST AND NO PRESSURE FOR PUBLICATION
OF THAT DOCUMENT BY THE NINE. THERE WAS, HOWEVER, THE
GENERAL ASSUMPTION THAT THE MIDDLE EAST EXPERTS WOULD

BE STUDYING BEFORE THE NEXT MINISTERIAL POLITICAL COOPERATION MEETING, APRIL 18-19, THE ADVISABILITY OF ALTERING AND/OR MAKING PUBLIC A STATEMENT BY THE EC ON THE MIDDLE EAST.

3. THE POLITICAL DIRECTORS DIRECTED THE PRESIDENCY, THROUGH AMBASSADOR RAMSBOTHAM IN WASHINGTON, TO MAKE AN ORAL RESPONSE TO UNDER SECRETARY HABIB'S BRIEFING ON SECRETARY VANCE'S VISIT TO THE MIDDLE EAST. THAT RESPONSE WILL HAVE THE FOLLOWING BASIC ELEMENTS:

-- THE EC WERE GRATEFUL FOR THE TIMELINESS OF THE HABIB BRIEFING;

-- THE US WILL HAVE RECEIVED BILATERALLY DETAILED ACCOUNTS OF THE VISITS TO THE AREA BY THE FRENCH AND GERMAN FOREIGN MINISTERS;

-- NONETHELESS, THE NINE WOULD LIKE TO INFORM THE US OF THE POLITICAL COMMITTEE'S CURRENT VIEWS IN LIGHT OF RECENT HIGH-LEVEL VISITS;

-- IN GENERAL, THE EUROPEAN MINISTERS GAINED THE SAME IMPRESSIONS AND HEARD THE SAME VIEWS EXPRESSED AS SECRETARY VANCE;

-- THE EC BELIEVES THAT WE MUST TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE PRESENTLY MORE PROPITIOUS SITUATION TO ACHIEVE A COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT IN THE MIDDLE EAST;

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-- ALL THE PARTIES ARE PREPARED, IN PRINCIPLE, TO RETURN TO GENEVA IN THE SECOND HALF OF 1977;

-- ALL PARTIES IN THE AREA WANT THE US TO PLAY AN ACTIVE ROLE;

-- THE THREE PRINCIPAL ISSUES TO BE RESOLVED ARE THE NATURE OF THE PEACE, WITHDRAWAL AND TERRITORIAL ISSUES, AND THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION;

-- THE MOST IMMEDIATE PROBLEM TO BE OVERCOME IS PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATION IN GENEVA. THERE ARE DIFFERING VIEWS AMONG THE ARABS ON THIS MATTER, BUT NONE OF THEIR FORMULAS IS NOW ACCEPTABLE TO ISRAEL. THE NINE AWAIT WITH INTEREST THE PALESTINIAN COUNCIL MEETING ON MARCH 12;

-- IT SHOULD BE CLEAR FROM THE ABOVE THAT THE EC'S ASSESSMENT OF THE MIDDLE EAST IS VERY CLOSE TO THAT OF SECRETARY VANCE AND THE UNITED STATES. WHILE IT WILL BE

DIFFICULT TO MAKE PROGRESS ON ANY OF THE MAJOR ISSUES
BEFORE THE ISRAELI ELECTIONS, IN THE EC'S JUDQMENT IT
IS IMPORTANT THAT DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY BE MAINTAINED.

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